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### MEET A "STRONG MULTI-HYPHENATE" CAPTAIN FOR LIFE

JAMIE MONAHAN IS AN INTIMACY COORDINATOR AND MUCH MORE

by [Jim Hanchett](#) | March 21, 2024

*Above: On the set of the film I'll Find You, director Alan Adeleke and intimacy coordinator Jamie Monahan '09*

*Read time: about 2 min*

Jamie Monahan '09 has held virtually every possible position in theatrical and film production. She is also an adjunct professor and the resident intimacy director at Fairfield University. While multi-talented, Monahan's career is increasingly focused on crafting authentic and impactful intimate scenes on stage and on set. It's a skill she's developed over 20 years of working in theater and film, but her foundation of the basics - understanding performers, directors and the art they make - was established at Christopher Newport.

Monahan has served as an intimacy coordinator or director in a range of short and feature films and theatrical productions. You can find her impressive credits [here](#) and her gracious answers to our questions below:

*You've called yourself a strong multi-hyphenate. What does that mean?*

Someone who has many talents. I am an award-winning actor,

director, producer, writer, and intimacy professional. I've also worked as a casting assistant and casting director. I've held roles in crew, ranging from production assistant to assistant director and everything in between. When someone asks for my resume, I have to ask 'Which one?' Society loves to box us into being one thing, but I rebel against that and embrace being multifaceted.

*What are some of the challenges and rewards that come with being an intimacy coordinator?*

Right now the biggest challenge is a lack of understanding about what the role of an intimacy coordinator or intimacy director is or what we do. A huge part of my job is explaining my job and its value. The biggest reward is working with actors and directors to tell stories of intimacy authentically. To show how we can use moments of intimacy to further storytelling, plot, and character development. I really love working with students and emerging filmmakers. The younger generation has such a better understanding of consent and boundaries and they embrace this role wholeheartedly. I love when I walk away from a project knowing I made a difference not just for the actors involved but also the crew.



Jamie Monahan '09 (left), ready for the stage for the 2007 CNU production of Urinetown.

*How did CNU prepare you for your varied career?*

I majored in acting with a minor in dance at CNU. My major and minor have prepared me as an artist, an intimacy coordinator (film/TV), and an intimacy director (theater).

My acting major taught me that understanding the story, the moment before, the given circumstances, the context, and the history between two characters can add depth to any performance. With a deep understanding of the nuances of touch and how a story can be told physically when there is no dialogue, thanks to my dance minor, an intimacy professional can add complexity to an actor's understanding of their character and the story we're trying to tell.

What I love about the CNU theatre program is that we were required to learn all aspects of the theatrical process. This taught me a deep understanding and respect for all of the artists involved in creating a show. An intimacy coordinator and intimacy director can create and facilitate a safer space for actors to explore and play, but we also offer support and resources to the director and crew.

*Tell us about your current projects and where we'll see you next?*

I'm currently intimacy directing "The Lightning Thief" at Fairfield University and "Grease" at The Wilton Playshop. I intimacy coordinated six films last year, all of which will be screening at festivals this year. There are also two films currently on the festival circuit. Keep an eye out for "Escaping Ohio" (feature) and others that you can track on my Instagram. My goal for 2024 is to work on 20+ projects as an intimacy professional.

*Any special CNU memory or shoutout you would like to share?*

I have so many fond and special memories of my time at CNU, but one of my favorites was traveling abroad with the theatre department to London. Traveling internationally, watching so much theater, exploring the city with friends and professors, and seeing so much diversity in storytelling was a core memory for me.